

Rainbow Reveille

September 2005

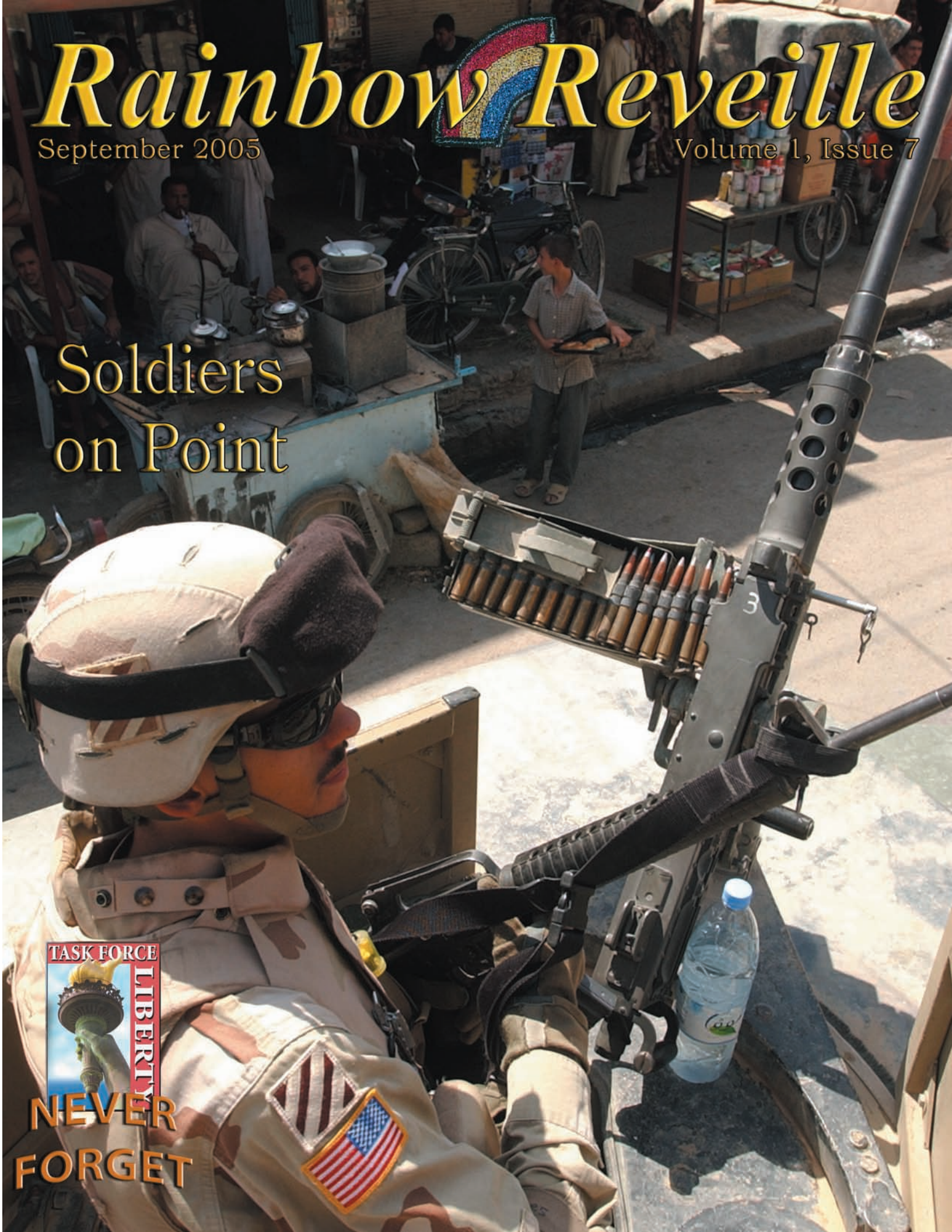
Volume 1, Issue 7

Soldiers
on Point

TASK FORCE

LIBERTY

NEVER
FORGET



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*Pvt. 1st Class Justin Reyes, infantryman,
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Regiment, Task Force Liberty, scans
the buildings above a city street during
a momentary pause while patrolling.
The unit conducts frequent dismounted
patrols, checking on the local civilians
and small businesses around the Tikrit
area of Iraq. (Photo by Sgt. Matthew
Acosta, 22nd Mobile Public Affairs
Detachment)*



to Task Force Liberty
photo by Spc. Jimmy D.



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Temperature will drop, not tempo

While the heat of summer begins to give way to autumn in Iraq, Soldiers in Task Force Liberty look forward to a drop-off in the daily high temperatures of North Central Iraq.

What we do not anticipate, however, is any drop-off in our intensity or initiative in conducting combat operations. The days and weeks ahead are important for the Iraqi people and their security forces. We shall remain vigilant and aggressive in our operations alongside our Iraqi army partners to neutralize the insurgency.

The challenges of countering IEDs and disrupting terrorist cells remain across our area of operations. The insurgency will make its best effort to derail the democratic process and intimidate Iraqis from participating. In all this, they shall fail.

September marks a period of political dialogue and discussion even as we increase our level of activity to kill or capture terror cells and Iraqi rejectionists. Even as we conduct military operations, we remain outside of the political debate as Iraqis decide for themselves what type of government is best for their country.



Maj. Gen. Joseph J. Taluto

No amount of insurgent activity can alter the course that the Iraqi people chose earlier this year. Local and provincial governments continue to develop and support the people while Iraqi Security Forces grow stronger and more capable.

We have spent the better part of a year training and equipping our Iraqi army partners in conducting this counterinsurgency fight. Now is their time to step forward to secure their elections. Their plans and operations orders to safeguard the upcoming ref-

erendum vote are complete and reinforce the Iraqi police who will secure polling sites and the ballots.

Today, our Iraqi Security Force partners conduct half of all our operations in North Central Iraq. Whether independent or the lead element in joint operations, we continue to see improvements in Iraqi forces, both in their organization, in their training and in the field.

Our role in this joint effort is clear: we shall protect the democratic process as the Iraqi people step forward to determine their future. We continue to hear feedback from our Iraqi partners that turnout for the constitutional referendum will be much higher than earlier this year.

Even as Task Force Liberty marks seven months of operations in Iraq, many of our Soldiers and units are approaching their one-year milestone for deployment this fall. We have gained valuable experience and skill in our job; now is not the time for complacency. Stay sharp and keep your edge.

Stay aggressive and we will deter those who seek to silence the voice of the Iraqi people.

NEVER FORGET!

Liberty 6

Fight complacency with discipline

As you read this article, many of our Task Force Liberty units are well into their relief in place with the unit(s) that are replacing them as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom V. A few units have even already had their transfer of authority ceremonies and are en route home.

A deliberate RIP is intended to show the incoming unit the battle space they will assume and how we are conducting the fight. Whether that fight is economic, governance, infrastructure or kinetic, our No. 1 job is to set up the new unit for success. A RIP is done to standard and not to time. The left seat/right seat ride is our teaching method of choice. We show the incoming unit how we accomplish our tasks associated with our duty position and mission, and the standards that are associated with those tasks. The new unit is then placed into position to demonstrate proficiency in those identified tasks. Only after all tasks are demonstrated and performed to standard by the incoming unit



Command Sgt. Maj. Richard Fearnside

are we prepared to conduct the TOA.

This is a fluid battle space and the enemy changes tactics, adapts, and gives us a new look everyday. Every Soldier is a warrior! There is no Us/You. There is no reserve vs. active duty. We will be a team all the way through the RIP process and conduct it with

professionalism and the knowledge that has been painfully learned over the past year. That knowledge must and will be passed on to the professionals that follow us.

It is a natural tendency to think about going home during this period in our rotation. This where the noncommissioned officers earn their pay and fight complacency. Complacency leads to reduced mission focus and accidents. Statistics from previous OIF rotations have already demonstrated that accidents increase dramatically the last two months prior to redeployment, and that the most disciplined units have the greatest success fighting complacency.

As I have said and will continue to say, good leadership (NCOs), adherence to standards, and self-discipline (executing trained standards), tied together with good risk management practices are our keys to fighting complacency and redeploying safely.

NEVER FORGET!

Liberty 7

LIBERTY



Major Neil Reilly, (left) 1-17 Cavalry Regiment, renders a salute to Lt. Col. Frank Muth after being awarded the Air Medal with Valor during an awards ceremony Aug. 30 on Forward Operating Base Mackenzie, Ad Duluiyah, Iraq.

Seven aviators awarded Air Medal with Valor

Story, photos by Pfc. Lamar Dancil
22d Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

FORWARD OPERATING BASE MACKENZIE, Iraq- The day marked a monumental moment for seven aviators of the 1st Squadron, 17th Cavalry Regiment.

Seven aviators were awarded the Air Medal with Valor during a ceremony Aug. 30 at Forward Operating Base Mackenzie for their actions while under fire and in direct enemy contact.

Major Neil A. Reilly, Capt. Andrew Byer, Capt. Ben Boardman, Chief Warrant Officer 3 Lee Conley, Chief Warrant Officer 3 James McDaniel and Chief Warrant Officer 2 Robert L. Moody were honored for their actions April 4.

When looking back at the turn of events, McDaniel, commander of Company D, Air Mission Control, 82nd Aviation Brigade said, "ground troops were already pinned down; I remembered hearing shots being fired (at the ground troops) as we received the 'troops in contact call.'"

When they arrived on the scene, Iraqi army and Coalition troops were pinned down and receiving heavy fire, McDaniel said.

Boardman, of Troop D, 1-17 Cav, and native of Knoxville, Tenn., said "there was already a (Cav) team that had taken the initial responding call. They had went to 'Winchester or Black' (all ammo and supplies had been depleted) and it took approximately 20 to 30 minutes to respond."

While en route, medical evacuation and other strategic plans started taking place to help the ground forces break contact with the enemy so the reconsolidated team could take over, Boardman said.

He said he recalled a large number of Iraqi army troops fighting

alongside Coalition Forces, willing to be led by U.S. troops to reach a common goal.

When asked what went through his mind during the heat of battle, Byer said, "Nothing goes through your mind because you don't think about it. At the time everything is going too fast. Even when we act on a routine training mission we take advantage of opportunity training. So when you get the opportunity to put your training into effect, it is rote memory by then because you have done it so many times."

Chief Warrant Officer 4 Mark Martin, native of Galax, Va., was the seventh awarded the Air Medal with Valor for his actions on May 8, during the "Mothers Day Battle."

Martin was the air mission commander directing actions of his team as well as calling in all close supporting air strikes. During the battle Martin and his team responded to ground troops coming under fire by terrorists along the Tigris River.

During the 4-hour long battle, the team had to leave several times to refuel and rearm the aircraft.

Martin said one of the factors that made the battle significant was the U.S. Marine Corps F-18 Hornet jets and U.S. Air Force F-16 Falcon jets, as well as combined ground forces, fought together and not one aircraft was lost during the 4-hour long engagement.

Byer best summed up how it felt to be awarded these medals when he said "it felt odd getting recognized, it was something that I was uncomfortable with. I'm uncomfortable because there are 60 other pilots in my unit that do the same thing, they answer the same radio calls, fly through the same hot spots and I would have loved to see them get recognized as I did".



Securing Tampa from IED threat

**Story, photos by
Staff Sgt. Matthew Acosta**
22nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

FORWARD OPERATING BASE PALIWODA, Balad, Iraq- Although the Iraqi army is well on its way to taking responsibility for the security of the area around Forward Operating Base Paliwoda, Coalition Forces are still patrolling Main Supply Route Tampa and the surrounding areas, keeping the roads open for Coalition travel.

Every day, Soldiers of Combat Troop, 5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry, 1st Brigade Combat Team, Task Force Liberty, mount trucks and set out to check roads and set up observation posts, with or without the assistance of the Iraqi army.

"We try to utilize the Iraqi soldiers as much as possible, taking them out on patrol and sitting back while they do most of the work leading the patrol and clearing the MSR and other known (improvised explosive device) sites," said Staff Sgt. Derrick White, dismount patrol commander, Troop C, 5-7. "But whether we have them or not, we still need to go out and make sure the roads around here are clear.

"Sometimes the Iraqi soldiers are busy raiding a nearby village or patrolling other problematic areas and they can't go out with us so we go without them," said White.

Although the roads are patrolled several times a day by the Soldiers, the IED threat



Sergeant Lucas Wolfe, gunner, 5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry, Task Force Liberty, scans the horizon while manning an observation post in Balad. The unit uses the area for overwatch on a road frequently used by insurgents who place improvised explosive devices.

remains at an elevated level.

The IED attack that destroyed a Bradley Fighting Vehicle was on a road infamous for IED attacks against the Coalition Forces. White's platoon regularly sets up observation posts around the area looking for suspicious activity.

"We use the highest site in the area for an observation post," White said. "From here we can see into different sections of the area we're responsible for covering, and if we can see that far, we can shoot that far too."

Besides observation posts, the Soldiers conducted several random vehicle inspections and one deliberate inspection.

"The last few times we were hit with an IED, there have been reports by more than one person of a pink-colored vehicle fleeing the

scene at a high rate of speed," said White. "This is the only pink car in Balad."

White carefully approached the driver and asked his business in the area.

The driver of the vehicle told White he lives on the other side of Balad and knew nothing about the IEDs.

White let him go with a warning after thoroughly searching his vehicle.

"It just seems so odd that every time we get hit, there's a mention of a pink car in the area," he said. "Pink is just not that popular here."

While the Soldiers are out on patrol, they are made aware of intelligence reports that may come in as the patrol is out clearing the streets.

White said they get calls on the radio telling them to keep an eye out for specific makes and models and colors of suspicious vehicles.

From now on, White said, whenever they see the pink taxi, the driver is going to be pulled over and searched, especially if there's an explosion in the area.

Until the Iraqi army takes complete control of the road and MSR security around FOB Paliwoda, Coalition Forces will continue to patrol the streets looking for those who may plant IEDs or drive pink taxis. 🌈



An Iraqi soldier from 3rd Battalion, 1st Brigade, 4th Division, checks a man's identification at a traffic checkpoint in Balad.

Task Force scores with soccer giveaway

Story, photos by Staff Sgt. Matthew Acosta
22nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

FORWARD OPERATING BASE DAN-GER, Tikrit, Iraq- Gone are the days when a military force would invade another country, devastate it, leave it in ruins, and abandon the lifeless aftermath to an uncertain future.

Today, there are many aspects of fighting a modern-day war; one of those is to help rebuild what was damaged in the conflict. Coalition Forces are now focusing on rebuilding Iraq, a country plagued by years of war and political and economic unrest, despite still waging war n terrorists.

Besides construction projects and economic infrastructure reorganization, some programs exist to help one of the most unimportant important activities in Iraq -- soccer.

"Besides combat operations, another part of rebuilding Iraq is to give attention to Iraq's youth services and organizations," said Lt. Col. Todd Wood, commander, 2nd Battalion, 7th Infantry, Task Force Liberty. "Soccer is the national sport here and it's very important to these people."

The previous civil affairs unit had started donating money to a local soccer stadium in Tikrit for refurbishment and maintenance.

However, seeing the Salah Ad Din Provincial Soccer League struggling to maintain as a functioning league, the incoming civil affairs unit decided to "get the ball rolling" for them, a civil affairs officer said.

"Things weren't going so well for the existing soccer league here," said Capt. Christopher Ortega, civil affairs officer, 2-7. "So we decided to use money donated from a private American business to purchase thousands of dollars worth of official uniforms and distribute them to the 25 soccer teams in the provincial league, to give them a jumpstart."

The civil affairs team coordinated the purchasing of uniforms and equipment through a supplier in Baghdad, and distributed them to the teams at a ceremony held at the Al Alam Soccer Stadium in Tikrit Aug. 17.

Crowds gathered around



A goal is scored by an Iraqi soccer player during a game using the new uniforms distributed by Task Force Liberty Soldiers. The uniforms were purchased with money donated by a private American business.

the stadium to see the massive amount of newly purchased soccer gear stacked in boxes along the sideline of the playing field.

As part of the ceremony, two teams from the league were issued their uniforms early and played a soccer game using the newly acquired gear.

Wood said it was great to see the Iraqis play the game in high-quality, official uniforms they normally might not have.

After the match, the team managers and sponsors lined up to get their team's gear -- complete uniforms to include soccer balls, soccer shoes, towels and gear bags.

"To see the excitement and appreciation on their faces as they played the game just made me feel good being a part of it," said Spc. Daniel Sterett, civil affairs, 2-7. "It also felt good knowing we gave (the children) something to do to get them off the streets and maybe inspired them to set goals for themselves."

Ortega said the entire league is Iraq-run and they are confident the league will function as planned with their newly equipped teams.

"If we keep the kids off the streets by keeping them occupied and happy doing something they love," said Spc. Charles Richardson, civil affairs, 2-7, "then there is less of a chance they will end up doing bad things in town or getting into trouble."



Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 7th Infantry, Task Force Liberty, unload soccer uniforms and equipment from a truck to distribute to young Iraqi men and boys who play on teams in a league sponsored by local Iraqi Security Forces.

Guns Up

Task Force Paladins provide extra punch

Story, photos by Staff Sgt. Matthew Acosta
22nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

FORWARD OPERATING BASE PALIWODA, Balad, Iraq—Coalition Forces around Forward Operating Base Paliwoda can rest assured that when they are out on patrol and need an extra punch of firepower, they can rely on a crew of Soldiers to place deadly high-explosive precision fire on a target without seeing it, day or night.

The nine-man crew of the 8th Howitzer Section, Battery B, 1st Battalion, 41st Field Artillery, 1st Brigade Combat Team, Task Force Liberty, is on call 24 hours a day safeguarding the lives of those in need, with the help of the M109-A6 Paladin, the Army's medium self-propelled howitzer.

"Our mission is to provide quick fire support for units that need it, but we have the ability to send illumination rounds over a targeted area for support on night operations or to just let the insurgents know we're watching them," said Staff Sgt. Jason Massey, howitzer section chief.

The crew is also called upon to fire periodic terrain denial missions and counterfire missions toward the source of incoming mortar rounds or rockets.

The U.S. Army's M109-A6 Paladin 155 Medium self-propelled howitzer battery, Task Force Liberty, fires a volley of rounds during a calibration fire.

"When we see the insurgents firing from the same firing point, setting a trend, we periodically fire rounds on the coordinates to prevent the enemy from using it," Massey said. "And when we have rounds impact on the FOB, we return fire at the point where they fired from."

The unit has also been called upon to fire white-phosphorous rounds into wooded areas to clear it of concealment the enemy might use.

With the ability to send a 138-pound laser-guided, high explosive, anti-tank warhead over 30 kilometers, the area of fire-support coverage includes several other Coalition Forces bases in the Balad area.

Although the Paladin is mobile, it's mostly used as a stationary piece. In the event it might be used for the combat support role outside its range, the tracked vehicle gun is driven closer to the intended target.

"With this capability," Massey said, "we can be rolling down the road and get a fire mission from the fire direction center over the computer."



Staff Sgt. Jason Massey, howitzer crew chief (left), Sgt. Thomas Hubbard (middle) and Pfc. Kenneth Campbell (right) practice crew drills. The crew simulated loading rounds, checking coordinates and firing "ghost rounds" to maintain quick reaction counter-fire times.



longing to Battery B, 1st Battalion, 41st Field Artillery, 1st Brigade Combat Team, Task Force Liberty, in Balad, Iraq.

Massey said that the crew can stop the vehicle and it will calibrate the gun to the vehicle's position on the terrain, turn in the direction of the target, fire and then continue driving down the road.

When the Soldiers aren't firing artillery rounds, they're maintaining the weapon system, keeping it in precise firing condition and temperature.

"Keeping the gun ready to fire is almost a precise science," Massey said.

Since the propellant used in the artillery piece is temperature sensitive, it must be checked on a constant basis.

According to Pfc. Robert Waid, field artillery cannon crewmember, if the powder is cool, the round may fall short of a specified target than if it were calibrated for warmer powder.

"The powder will burn quicker if heated and slower if cooled, so the temperature must be put into the targeting computer for precise calculations to hit a target," said Waid.

Massey said once the FDC gets a request for fire, using the targeting computer and database, it relays the fire coordinates, specifies the particular round and powder charge to the gun's computer through a satellite link, which is confirmed by the gun's crew, then the howitzer is fired.

Whether they receive a call for fire support to suppress an insurgent attack, return incoming fire or to fire illumination flares to aid in night combat operations, the crew responds within a moments notice.

"From the time the call for fire comes in, we can have rounds splashing (impacting) down on target in under a minute," said Pfc. Andrew Ponton, field artillery cannon crewmember.

Massey said they normally focus on maintaining the vehicles, cleaning weapons or training.

"Sometimes we do crew drills and other training, right now we're preparing Soldiers for the board," he added, "taking care of Soldier business."

But no matter how important a job the crew might be doing while on call, everything comes to a rapid halt when a mission is called in.

"We can be doing anything, but when someone calls for fire, we immediately drop what we're doing and head to the gun," Massey said. "The mission comes first."

Massey said the counterfire missions can be sporadic.

"We have had five counterfire missions in one day and then gone days without firing a single round," he added.

The crew of four works in unison to complete fire missions in the confined space of the vehicle, rotating jobs every few weeks.

During a fire mission, the crew chief monitors the radio and fire control computer for communications with the FDC and supervises the crew working the gun, while the driver manages the engine/hydraulic systems that power the gun also logging the outgoing rounds.

Cannoneer one sets the timer delay on the round if needed and loads the round in the breech. After the gunner loads the powder and closes the breech, he rechecks the chief's fire control computer coordinates. The number one man primes the charge and fires the weapon on the chief's command.

With a reload time of less than 30 seconds, the crew can send a volley of three rounds out, ranging from just outside the FOB walls to several miles away in under a minute and a half.

To date, the unit has fired more than 935 rounds with more than 190 fire missions, since they arrived in Iraq in January, on call day and night, seven days a week, 24-hours a day in support of Coalition Forces operations.



Private 1st Class Andrew Ponton, field artillery cannon crewmember, 1st Battalion, 41st Field Artillery, 1st Brigade Combat Team, Task Force Liberty, restocks the Paladin's powder storage container with a "red bag," one of the more powerful charges the Howitzer fires.



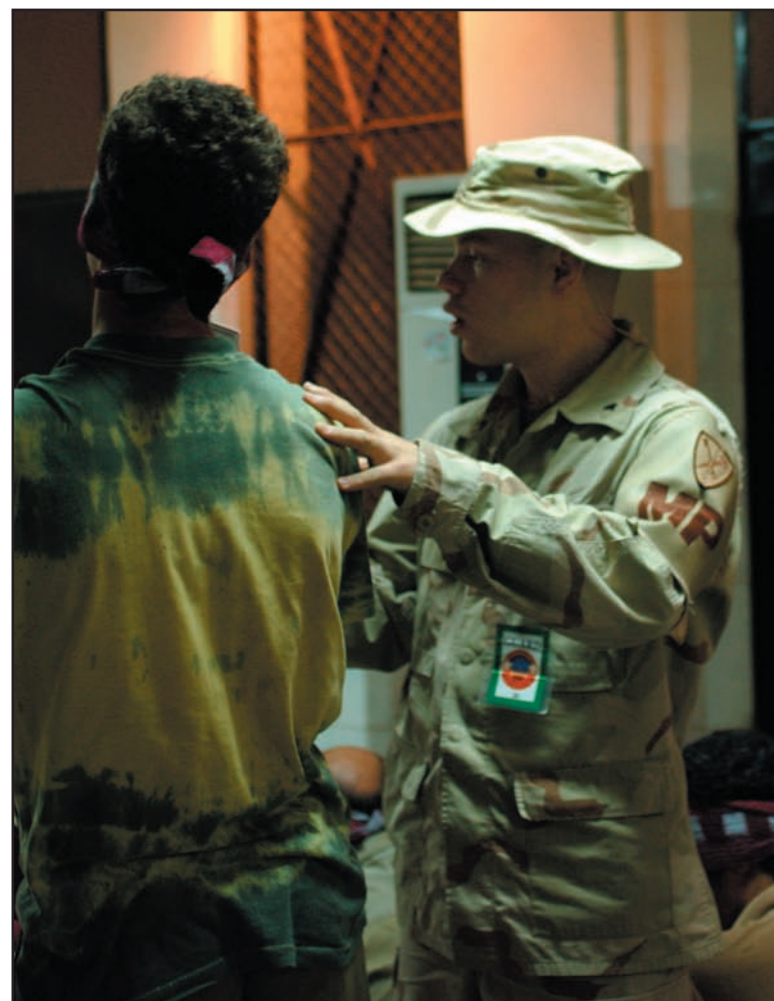
Specialist Jose Castro, 918th Military Police Company, Task Force Liberty, sifts through the belongings of an Iraqi prisoner's while searching for evidence.



A military police officer checks the flexcuffs on a detainee.



Specialist Jose Cintron, 918th Military Police Company, Task Force Liberty, checks a detainee before being transported to another Coalition base.



Specialist Amado Carrasquillo, 918th Military Police Company, Task Force Liberty, checks detainees' identification before they can be transported.

Military police strive to keep terrorists off the streets

**Story, photos
by Spc. Adam Phelps**

**22nd Mobile Public
Affairs Detachment**

Liberty, searches

FORWARD OPERATING BASE DANGER, Tikrit, Iraq – Task Force Liberty Soldiers work to make Iraq's streets a safer place by getting the criminals and terrorists off of the streets.

Military police from the 42nd Infantry Division also conduct cordon and searches and transport prisoners between detention facilities in the Task Force Liberty area of operations.

"Getting these guys off the streets does a lot for American forces over here and the Iraqi people feel safer that these guys aren't out planting improvised explosive devices or shooting AK-47s," said Spc. James McGurn, gunner, 42nd Military Police Company, and a native of Schenectady, N.Y.

Putting these guys in custody helps protect more than the Coalition Forces, said the task force provost marshal.

"Were not just making it safer for the Soldiers, were making it safer for Iraq," said Lt. Col. Joseph Ricchiazzi, 42nd ID provost marshal and senior law enforcement advisor to the Task Force Liberty commander. "When a terrorist pulls a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device in the middle of a market they don't hurt a U.S. Soldier, their hurting Iraqis. Were making Iraqis feel safer. The Iraqi people want to see law enforcement working

here. They understand law enforcement and how important it is to society."

Once suspected bad guys have been caught, the Soldiers of the 42nd MP Co. must still protect them while they are under Coalition control.

"Once they're in our custody it's our job to protect them," said McGurn. "They can't protect themselves against the IEDs or small arms fire, so it's our job to get them from the detention facility to Abu Ghraib."

The MPs must also make sure the detainees are treated correctly while they are under their control, Ricchiazzi said.

"We have a duty and responsibility to make sure all people detained by Coalition forces are treated humanely and with dignity and respect," said the Buffalo, N.Y., native. "By taking them down to Abu Ghraib in a humane fashion and timely method we show that we are committed to taking care of them."

Catching suspected terrorists and transporting them is only a part of the job the 42nd MP's are doing. They are also training replacements to do their job, one MP said.

"We started out slow but day by day we are learning more and becoming prepared to take 42nd ID's place," said Sgt. Julio Tores, 918th Military Police Company, from San Juan, Puerto Rico.

"The Puerto Rican unit is coming on strong after a slow start with mobilizing," Ricchiazzi said. "They put the unit together from pieces of other units but they are coming along. They are a very good unit, the longer they're here the better they're getting."

Even though the 42nd ID military police are from several states they still work together and do their best, Ricchiazzi said.

"The 42nd MPs are a unit split up over Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York," said Ricchiazzi. "They are all performing well, and representing their states very well and I'm very proud of how they're doing."

One of the biggest rewards the MPs are getting is seeing the fruits of their labor.

"A lot of people out here don't see what Soldiers do," McGurn said. "We see the results of the work we do and feel we are making a difference here."

**"Were not just
making it safer for the
Soldiers, were making
it safer for Iraq."**

**Lt. Col. Joseph Ricchiazzi
senior law enforcement advisor
42nd Infantry Division
Provost Marshal Office**

Force Liberty,





Turning out the lights

Iraqis stage independent night raid



Iraqi soldiers from Company D, 3rd Battalion, 1st Brigade, 4th Division search an Iraqi household looking for bomb-making materials, during a recent independent night raid. Iraqi troops are gradually taking over responsibility for the country's security.

Story, photos by Staff Sgt. Matthew Acosta
22nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

FORWARD OPERATING BASE PALIWODA, Balad, Iraq- Recently units in the Iraqi army have started taking over the role of Coalition Forces by spearheading operations.

Using its intelligence assets to gather information, Company D, 3rd Battalion, 1st Brigade, 4th Division, is now planning, rehearsing and executing missions with little or no Coalition Forces help.

"They are almost completely independent of our support," said Capt. Phillip Poteet, commander, Troop C, 5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry, 1st Brigade Combat Team, Task Force Liberty. "The only reason we're there is to coordinate air medical evacuations in case the event arises and to ensure quality control."

The Iraqi army does have medical vehicles available to them, Poteet said, but since Coalition medical technology is better and

more effective he makes it available to the Iraqi soldiers if needed.

"Other than that, these (Iraqi soldiers) gather intelligence, plan and conduct the missions flawlessly at times," Poteet said.

During a mission Aug. 26, Company D soldiers raided a small village outside Balad that yielded three men suspected for operating an improvised explosive device-making cell.

"By the time I had gotten out of my vehicle and walked up to the objective, these guys had all the males rounded up outside in the front yard, searched the men and had them lying face down, with their target already identified," Poteet said.

The efficiency level they operate at is a tremendous improvement since last year, he added.

"After the mission I gathered with my men and talked about it," said Capt. Ahmed Hikmet Abdul-Jabar, Co. D commander. "They told me that we should do missions like that everyday and they are



Iraqi army soldiers from Company D, 3rd Battalion, 1st Brigade, 4th Division, carefully search an Iraqi household, near Balad, looking for bomb-making materials.

proud to be taking bad guys off the streets.”

Although the Coalition Forces have newer technology than their Iraqi counterparts do, there is something the Coalition Forces lack.

“Because the Iraqi army lives here they can talk to the locals better than we can, therefore they have better intelligence gathering capabilities when talking to people on the street,” Poteet said. “They know when they’re being lied to, and they know how to use informants and can use them more effectively than we can.”

Poteet said one reason they can utilize the locals for better “street knowledge” than Coalition Forces, is because they are trusted more since they are part of the community, whereas the Coalition Soldiers are foreigners.

“It’s good for the people because they feel safe knowing the Iraqi army is here making them safe,” said Ahmed. “Sometimes they are scared by the American Army but we live here and they are not afraid

of us.”

This fearlessness is shared by the locals and those who vow to protect them.



Soldiers from Company D, 3rd Battalion, 1st Brigade, 4th Division, search cabinets during a night raid on a house in Balad, Iraq. The Iraqi soldiers were looking for materials used to make improvised explosive devices.

“It’s good for the people because they feel safe knowing the Iraqi army is here making them safe.”

***Capt. Ahmed Hikmet Abdul-Jabar
commander***

***Company D, 3rd Battalion,
3rd Brigade, 4th Division, Iraqi army***

“When my men wear this uniform, working on patrols and raids they are not afraid of anything,” said Ahmed.

“(Coalition Soldiers) taught us everything they know about moving with the squads and security around objectives, and when we do it, we do it well,” Ahmed added.

Since the training started, the Iraqi soldiers have made advances in their proficiency, moving toward the eventual goal of assuming total responsibility for security in Iraq.

“I’m really proud of them for the job they have been doing, and it’s an honor to sit back and watch them execute the mission they planned and researched,” Poteet said. “They receive the training very well and apply it to the missions they execute.

“They are making great strides in taking over the responsibilities of these operations and the security of this country. The more they do, the less we have to do, which also gives my guys a chance to rest and breathe easy.”





Private 1st Class Kenith Kinna, infantryman, 5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry, Task Force Liberty, watches the people of Balad while manning his M-240B machine gun, during a patrol of the city center.



Captain Mark Varga, (center) discusses a new police checkpoint project with Lt. Col. Jody Petery, (left) commander, 5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry, Task Force Liberty, and the Balad police chief (right).



Private 1st Class Rawn Graves, infantryman, 5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry, Task Force Liberty, keeps a look out while pulling security in the city of Balad, Iraq.

Site survey

Task Force 5-7 patrols polling places, new police checkpoints in hot spots

Story, photos by Staff Sgt. Matthew Acosta
22nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

FORWARD OPERATING BASE PALIWODA, Balad, Iraq- As the Iraqi army and police forces continue to take charge, constant Coalition Forces patrols are still crucial in protecting the development of Iraq and its security forces.

These patrols show a presence of military power and law enforcement for Coalition Forces as well as the Iraqi police.

"Our patrols are conducted with the Iraqi police and army to show the Iraqis they are capable of enforcing the same law and order we enforce," said Cpl. Robert Miller, infantryman, 5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry, 1st Brigade Combat Team, Task Force Liberty. "When we go out with them and let them take charge, it shows the people that we respect them as a security force, and in return, the people respect them more."

One step in handing control of the roads to the Iraqi police is to build police checkpoints at strategic or problematic areas where there may be high insurgent activity.

Miller said before they couldn't tell the police apart from the everyday citizens because they had no uniforms, but now they have uniforms, and are building police checkpoint facilities that have enough rooms for them to work in as well as sleeping quarters.

Months of training, supervision and support shaped the police force into a more professional security element.

"Now these guys have so much pride in themselves and what they're doing here," said Sgt. Timothy Gardner, infantryman, 5-7. "You can totally see the difference in their performance from several months ago."

Gardner said the police take their jobs seriously, especially since they got uniforms and actual checkpoints instead of just a shack on the side of the road.

"It gives them motivation and purpose," he said.

Although many of the policemen are taking law enforcement more seriously, there are still some who may "look the other way" when a small crime is being committed, said Lt. Col. Jody Petery, commander, 5-7.

"People are selling propane on the side of the road, maybe one or two containers to survive, but the fact of the matter is that selling fuel outside a gas station is illegal," said Petery. "If we give the appearance that small crimes are OK then we will never take complete control of the crime situation."



Corporal Alexis Beatles, infantryman, 5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry, Task Force Liberty, guards the commander of the cavalry unit, Lt. Col. Jody Petery, while he discusses city projects with the Balad police chief and a local Iraqi army troop commander.

Several people were caught stealing fuel from a broken pipeline earlier this month, said Petery.

"What we need to do is let these officers know the Iraqi government is losing \$4 million dollars every day because of fuel theft and illegal sales. With this money we could easily buy 20 or 30 new police vehicles and build multiple checkpoints."

According to Petery, insurgents will damage the pipeline, causing delays in Iraq's economic development. When the fuel leaks out other Iraqis collect it and use it or try to sell it.

"We can't look the other way on this, it's a growing problem," Petery said. "These people need to be arrested and jailed for their crimes. Just because they aren't the ones who damage the pipeline, they are still stealing from the government and it needs to stop."

"If the police let them get away with it, they should be the ones arrested because they are allowing this by not doing

something to stop it," Petery added. "We need to be stern with this."

Miller said when the Iraqi policemen are confronted with something they have never encountered before or something where they don't know how to react, they quickly adapt to the situation with a little help from the Coalition Forces.

"If they don't understand something or know what to do, we show them how to handle a situation, and they pick it up real fast," said Miller.

"There's no doubt in my mind these guys will be fine when we finally turn (Balad) over to them entirely," Miller said. "They learn more everyday and are more proficient at what they are doing, it's just a matter of time before we finally step back and leave their city in their hands."



Coalition Soldiers train ‘brothers in blue’

Story, photos by Spc. Adam Phelps
22nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

FORWARD OPERATING BASE DAN-GER, Tikrit, Iraq – Task Force Liberty Soldiers constantly work to better train their brothers in blue to take over when Coalition Forces withdraw from Iraq.

Infantrymen with 1st Battalion, 112th Infantry, trained some of Iraq’s Provincial High Crimes unit officers Aug. 24, in Tikrit, Iraq, to properly search buildings when looking for some of Iraq’s high target people wanted by Coalition and Iraqi forces.

“We will control everything here if we continue to get more training, more information on how to do the missions and do our job the right way,” said Capt. Ishmael Muhammed, PHC unit commander in Tikrit.

The members of the PHC unit are eager to learn what they can in order to perform their missions better, a Coalition Soldier said.

“I think they’re getting there,” said Staff Sgt. Robert Young, a police liaison with Company A, 1-112, and native of Monaca, Penn. “The motivation is there with a lot of the Iraqis. For now they still need our help, but in time I believe they will function quite well.”

The training that the 1-112th is giving the PHC unit is set up to simulate a real mission.

“Their missions are to conduct raids for

high-value targets – people wanted by Coalition Forces and Iraqi forces,” Young said. “This prepares them to go out and conduct these missions a little more safely and be more effective to accomplish their mission.”

Iraqi forces find the training contributes to obtaining their objectives, Muhammed said.

“The training is very useful for us because we get more information on how to treat the people and on how to deal with the terrorists and also how to deal with problems around our sector and our community,” he said.

Young said one of the reasons his unit is successful training Iraqi police is the Soldiers’ work in the civilian world.

“One thing that really helps is I’m a civilian police officer at home and I introduce myself that way to these guys so I think they find that common bond in policemen all over the

world,” he said. “They understand I’m here to help a brother in blue. They are very receptive to that rather than a normal Coalition Soldier.”

This training will also help Iraqi forces train themselves and spread what they have learned, Muhammed said.

“The training helps me out a lot because by this I’ll be able to give the training to my guys anytime I want,” he said. “I will be able to train other people from other departments, and that will help us out a lot to control our situation.”

Young said that training the Iraqi police force in better tactics is one of the most important missions in Iraq.

“I believe it’s the most important in Iraq at this time,” he said. “Nobody wants to see the Iraqi army patrolling the streets of Tikrit or anywhere else in Iraq, that’s a policeman’s job.”



Specialist Timmothy Byers (left) and Spc. Justin Wilcox (right) demonstrate how to enter a room and properly secure it and take down enemy targets.



Staff Sgt. Robert Young, 1-112 Infantry, guides members of the Provincial High Crimes unit as they train to take on enemy targets.

Soldiers give children inflatable toy, talk with locals while patrolling for IEDs

Story, photos by Maj. Chris Belcher
22nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

FORWARD OPERATING BASE PALIWODA, Balad, Iraq — They're out there everyday along Main Supply Route Tampa in the searing heat, waiting and watching as Coalition Forces convoys move along the route.

They're not terrorists, they're Soldiers from Troop B, 5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry, and their mission is to patrol the main supply route looking for improvised explosive devices and their makers, and maintaining a military presence near the village of Ishaki, Iraq, to keep the MSR safe.

With the temperature more than 120 degrees inside the Humvees, the Soldiers outside prepare to leave the forward operating base for the afternoon. They move around in the heat loading ice into coolers for their bottles of water, mounting machine guns in turrets and preparing the vehicles to roll out the gate.

First Lt. Jon Dower, platoon leader, Troop B, walked up and began his patrol briefing. He covered current terrorist tactics, the patrol route and the planned observation posts along the route.

The briefing over, Soldiers walked to their assigned vehicles, got in and the patrol moved from the "ready line" down a short road and out the gate of the FOB.

The heat would be a constant companion as the patrol moved up the MSR and into its first OP near the village of Ishaki.

Dower and "Jack," an Iraqi interpreter, talked to several families along the route.

"We ask about schools, water quality," Dower said. "We ask if they've seen anyone placing IEDs."

The Soldiers also interacted with the children at the houses, giving them candy and promising to bring a



Sergeant Jason Gamble, squad leader, Troop B, 5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry, inflates a toy for Iraqi children at a house near the village of Ishaki, Iraq, Aug. 28.

soccer ball back for one family's children. At one house, the children seem glad to see the Soldiers, while playing with an inflatable kite they were given. Their laughter rings out over the desert as they chase the floating black toy around the dirt yard.

While the children play, the adults talk to Dower.

"Sometimes, they want to talk to you," he said.

The Soldiers ask if the occupants of the house have seen anyone coming by and placing IEDs along the road, but the adults reply to them saying the terrorists use many roads and that they "haven't seen anything."

As the patrol headed away from the houses and back down the MSR towards FOB Paliwoda, Dower said "it was a good day because they didn't encounter any IEDs."

"It's a better day if you find an IED before it (detonates)," he added. "You can't expect that every day."

Dower said it was a good patrol because of the "positive encounter" with the people they met.

It was the end of a normal patrol for Red Platoon, the Soldiers had cleared the MSR, talked to the locals and now they were back on the FOB where their job is to prepare to do it again tomorrow.



Iraqi children play with an inflatable toy given to them by Soldiers from Troop B, 5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry.





Specialist Christian Hardwick, medic, Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry, Task Force Liberty, demonstrates the proper procedures and placements of hands for effective chest compressions during a CPR class for the Iraqi soldiers.

Coalition teaches Iraqis medical skills

Story, photos by Staff Sgt. Matthew Acosta
22nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

FORWARD OPERATING BASE PALIWODA, Balad, Iraq- Medical support for soldiers with boots on the ground is a critical part in waging war.

As Iraqi troops take over the role of conducting combat operations and raids, they must also step up to the role of providing their soldiers with the proper medical support, whether the routine sick-call patient or a wounded soldier with traumatic injuries.

Equipping the Iraqi army with medical personnel requires training from Coalition Soldiers who possess the ability to bridge the gaps in technology, language and customs between Coalition Forces and the Iraqi army.

"Right now Iraq's emergency medical system is in the process of being stood up," said Cpl. Slade Deister, medical supply noncommissioned officer, Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry, Task Force Liberty. "We're helping them as much as we can to treat both their military and civilian casualties and their sick."



Iraqi soldiers practice the fireman's carry during a combat life saver course taught by Coalition and Iraqi army medics.

Although the Coalition Forces are helping to set up the emergency medical system and treating Iraqis for medical related issues, they have started to turn away people and soldiers from coming to the Coalition base gate for free medical health care and divert them

to the hospital in Balad.

"Sometimes it breaks my heart to see someone in extreme pain, only to tell them they need to go to the hospital in Balad for treatment," said Spc. Dominic Italiano, medic and combat life saver instructor, 5-7. "But if we don't turn them away, they'll just keep coming here for treatment for the most minor injuries to life-threatening traumatic wounds.

"But obviously, if it's life threatening then we do what we can for the patient. Otherwise, we send them down the road," he added.

Since the Iraqi army is moving to take over combat operations in the area, Italiano said the decision was made to start training some Iraqi soldiers in first aid, starting with the combat life saver course.

"The Soldiers attend a three-day course learning the basics of first aid," Italiano said. "They get instruction in bandaging, splinting, checking for pulse and breathing, how and when to give (intravenous injections), how to assess a casualty and the fireman's carry, to name a few."

He said many of them receive the training well and out of those who can read and write, a select few are sent for further training as medical personnel in Taji and Tikrit medical facilities.

Training the Iraqi soldiers hasn't been without its share of challenges.

"In the beginning we used slides with words on it, but since many Iraqi Soldiers can't even read, it didn't work as well as we had planned," Deister said. "So we decided to use interpreters to help train the class explaining everything we say into Arabic which works well.

"Then we decided to put the Iraqi unit's medics to work helping us train these soldiers, integrating them into the training," he added.

Since they started incorporating the Iraqi medics into the training, the soldiers have been able to learn at a much faster rate and retain more knowledge when they take the final exam, Italiano said.

"Their customs also differ from ours in a sense when we need medical care we get it," said Italiano. "But they think if Allah wants them to live, he will save them. So sometimes, it's a bit difficult to get them to the point where they will treat each other if needed without worrying about 'Godly repercussions.'

"There have been soldiers who have thrown-up while getting IVs because the thought of not knowing if they are going against their own beliefs makes them physically sick," he added. "Treating them and training them is a challenge, but we've got it now, and they're doing just fine with it."



An Iraqi soldier practices sticking veins with an intravenous injection, during combat life saver training. Skin and veins are simulated by using clear IV tubing under stretched rubber sheets taped to a table to practice before using real IVs on soldiers.

Deister said the ultimate goal was to get the Iraqi army to stop relying on Coalition Forces for medical support. The Iraqi army already has a medical supply system in place, with a constantly growing inventory.

"They need to realize we're not going to be here forever to help them," said Italiano.

The Iraqi medics can effectively treat many injuries they encounter while out on patrol and raids, so the Coalition Forces do not have to worry about using all their supplies on them, Desiter said.

"Because we have our Soldiers to worry about," he added. 🌈

All-day ops in a restless city

*Company B, 3rd Battalion,
69th Armor, keeps watch from
observation posts across Samarra*

Spc. Jimmy D. Lane Jr.
1st BCT PAO

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SPEICHER, Tikrit, Iraq -- Soldiers stationed in the city of Samarra, Iraq, see action almost daily. Within the city limits, Company A and Company B of 3rd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment, stationed at Patrol Base Uvanni, set up observation posts. From these OPs they watch for insurgent activity and try to make the streets of Samarra safer for its citizens.

There is one Soldier to about every 300 people in Samarra. Samarra is a city where chaos is a daily thing, and Soldiers have to be ready for anything.

"There are two companies, or about 300, men in a city of about 100,000 people," said Pvt. Jeremiah Johnston, a Co. B, 3-69 Armor, squad automatic weapon gunner from Carrolltown, Pa. "A normal day around here is really not so normal. You never really know what



Specialist Shim Welch, a Company B, 3rd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment, watches over the city of Samarra from a rooftop. His unit is tasked with watching over the

you are doing until 10 minutes before you do it."

"We wake up every morning expecting to get shot at," said Pfc.

David Campbell, a Co. B, 3-69 Armor, grenadier from Tampa, Fla. "I wouldn't put that on any man. It was scary when we first got here, but as time goes by it gets easier to deal with."

Many of the Soldiers were fearful of what was ahead when they first arrived at Uvanni. After dealing with a few extreme situations, their job got easier for them to perform.

"When I first got here my biggest fear was that I wouldn't measure up to what I was called to do," said Pfc. Terry Hees, a Co. B, 3-69 Armor, assistant gunner from Eldon, Mo. "A perfect example of handling this was when I did first aid on a buddy who got shot. I also had a fear of dying. Now I only see it as the highest honor to give that sacrifice."

The Soldiers who man the OPs knew they wanted to do this kind of work, even before they joined the Army

"Honestly this is something I always wanted to do, since I was a little kid," said Spc. Shim Welch, a Co. B, 3-69 Armor, team leader from Asheville N.C. "My dad was infantry in the Army, and I wanted to be like him."

"I signed up knowing what I was going to do," Camp-



Specialist Shim Welch, a Company B, 3rd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment, team leader, tells Pfc. David Campbell, a Co. B grenadier, where to fire his M-203 grenade launcher during an Aug. 27 firefight in Samarra.



...t, team leader and a native of Asheville, N.C., watches the sun rise over the restless city.

bell said. "It's my job, and I love every minute of it."

Hees said he wanted to be in the military his whole life. He said there are many rewards for facing the dangers he does every day.

"There are very few jobs where you get to save somebody from tyranny or even save their lives. That is the ultimate reward from God for doing what he called me to do," Hees said.



A M2 Bradley Fighting Vehicle assigned to 3rd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment, races down a street in Samarra Aug. 27.



Private Jeremiah Johnson, a Company B, 3rd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment, squad automatic weapon gunner from Carrolltown, Pa., watches a street in Samarra from a rooftop

The Soldiers who work fighting the insurgency in Samarra say one of the most important things about the job is the Soldiers they work with.

"There's a special bond between me and the guys I work with," Campbell said. "Once that bond is there, you can't break it."

"I'm just doing for my buddies what any of them would do for me," Johnston said. "Doing the job together with them makes it not so bad. I wouldn't want to be out here with anybody else."

While danger and chaos are a daily part of the Soldiers' jobs, they do have the bigger picture in mind; keeping the streets of Samarra and its citizens safe.

"Basically our job here is to locate and root out the enemy and protect the citizens of Samarra so they can have a little taste of freedom," Johnston said.

The Soldiers feel differently about the citizens of Samarra who are just trying to live in peace.

"The people here in Samarra, they're not bad people," Welch said. "They're just trying to get by. They want to see us get the terrorists as bad as we do. Their lives are miserable because of the insurgent activity here."

"We're trying to give them a better place to live," Campbell said. "We want them to see that Saddam (Hussein) is gone and they don't have to be afraid anymore."

"We are trying to show the people that they can enjoy their lives and live them to the fullest," Hees said. "They don't have to live in fear if they have a sound government."

Those stationed at PB Uvanni and working in Samarra face other challenges than just the insurgency.

"The biggest challenge to being out here everyday is battling complacency," Welch said. "Every day you're out in the heat, just working all the time, and after so many hours it makes it hard not to want to cut corners."

"The heat is amazing," Johnston said. "I checked the wet bulb the other day it was like 151 degrees outside."

Becoming complacent can be dangerous for the Soldiers.

"The smallest breakdown in security, like not scanning your sector thoroughly is really all it takes to get someone hurt," Welch said.

Living at PB Uvanni can also be trying on the Soldiers' patience.

"We've definitely forfeited a lot of comforts of life to be out here," Welch said. "It really makes you appreciate the smallest things, like constant running water, hot meals everyday or even just being able to look out of the window."



Iraqi army gives patients ...

A place to lay their head

Story, photos

by Maj. Chris Belcher

22nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

FORWARD OPERATING BASE PALIWODA, Balad, Iraq — A good night's sleep is important for good health, it's even more important when you're a patient in a hospital.

Soldiers from 3rd Battalion, 1st Brigade, 4th Division, helped the patients of Balad General Hospital get their rest by delivering almost 100 beds from Forward Operating Base Paliwoda, Aug. 28.

The Iraqi soldiers had some help from Coalition Forces but this mission was about Iraqis taking care of Iraqis.

Captain Lana Wormstadt, team leader, Team 24, Company B, 445th Civil Affairs Battalion, attached to 5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry, acquired the beds, coordinated transportation and worked with the 5-7 Military Transition Team to have the Iraqi army deliver the beds to the hospital.

"The emphasis is on the Iraqi army doing this mission," said Wormstadt.

First Lt. Jassim Hassan Katham, battalion maintenance officer, took charge of his men after a quick discussion with Wormstadt. They loaded a cargo truck provided by 5-7 Cavalry with the first set of beds.

Workers from the Balad General Hospital helped the Iraqi soldiers unload the beds after the convoy arrived on the hospital grounds.

The beds will increase the ability of the hospital to help people in the local area by increasing its patient treatment capacity.

"Our hospital was built in 1972 and started with 100 beds," said Dr. Qasim-Hatam AlKaisy, director of Balad General Hospital. "In 2000 it was increased to 147 beds."

AlKaisy said because the hospital serves more than 200,000 people in Balad and the surrounding area there are more patients than beds.

"Sometimes they have to lay on the floor," he said.

The beds the Iraqi soldiers delivered will go in the hospital and its new emergency room, opened the same day the beds were delivered.

AlKaisy cut the ribbon at the door to the new building in a small ceremony attended by the Balad mayor, the city council, Iraqi soldiers and Coalition Forces. He then proudly walked everybody through, showing them the new facility.

The hospital's emergency room was modeled from a typical small American hospital's emergency room. It will provide services such as x-ray and trauma surgery to Balad and the local area assisting up to 1,000 people a day.

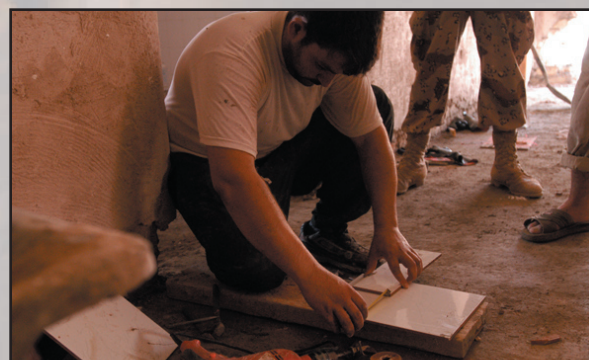
This mission is just another way the Iraqi Security Forces are helping to make Iraq a better place to work, live and get healthy.



3rd Battalion, 1st Brigade, 4th Division soldiers load beds onto an Iraqi army cargo truck on Forward Operating Base Paliwoda Aug. 31 for delivery to the Balad General Hospital.



Iraqi soldiers load beds into a cargo truck for delivery to Balad General Hospital. The beds will increase the ability of the hospital to care for patients.



An Iraqi worker prepares a tile to be cut prior to installation in the expectant mother's ward being built for Balad General Hospital in Balad, Iraq.

Learning one prisoner at a time

Iraqis slowly take detainee operations lead

Story, photos by Maj. Chris Belcher
22nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

FORWARD OPERATING BASE PALIWODA, BALAD, Iraq—As the Iraqi army takes the lead in combat operations it is learning to take the lead in other areas as well.

Captain Fadil Abid Al-Meer, intelligence officer, 3rd Battalion, 1st Brigade, 4th Division, is learning to process the detainees his fellow soldiers capture on their raids.

“I’ve been trained how to handle detainees,” said Al-Meer. “When the (Iraqi soldiers) bring the detainees here, we have to take a statement.”

Third Battalion’s intelligence section will take statements from soldiers involved in the capture and any eyewitnesses. They are required to have three statements on each detainee for further processing.

The Iraqi army does more than take statements for the detainees, soldiers also check on their health by providing medical attention if needed.

“We ask about (the detainees) health,”



A 3rd Battalion, 1st Brigade, 4th Division soldier questions a detainee captured during an Aug. 27 raid near Forward Operating Base Paliwoda, Balad, Iraq.

Al-Meer said. “If he’s sick we send him to the Balad Hospital.”

The Iraqis will complete the processing for the detainee once all health issues have been resolved.

They will question the detainee and determine if further processing is required.

“If we find out he is wanted for some-

thing we will transfer him to the Marshall Hall and the justice will take care of it,” said Col. Shuja’a Hasaen, commander, 3rd Bn. “If we find out he’s not guilty we’ll release him.”

Captain Seivirak Inson, intelligence officer, Military Transition Team, 5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, Task Force Liberty, coaches and mentors the 3rd battalion’s soldiers on detainee handling and intelligence operations.

The transition team’s job is to train and mentor the Iraqis until they are capable of conducting all operations with no coalition assistance.

Inson said the Iraqis have the desire to learn.

“We are slowly transitioning to the point where we turn everything over to them,” he added.

When that day comes, the Iraqi army will be ready to serve the people and bring stability to their country thanks to the hard work of Iraq’s security forces and the Soldiers who trained them.



Sergeant 1st Class Benjamin Perez, platoon sergeant, Troop B, 5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry, escorts a detainee.



An Iraqi soldier from 3rd Battalion, 4th Division, talks to a detainee captured during an early morning raid. The Iraqi army conducted the raid and initial detainee processing with assistance from 5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry, Task Force Liberty, Aug. 27 near Balad, Iraq.



No Zamboni needed

Division artillery Soldiers play hockey without ice

Story, photos by Sgt. Jennifer J. Eidson
22nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SUMMERALL, Bayji, Iraq – They don't have an ice rink or skates of any sorts, but Soldiers at Forward Operating Base Summerall, Bayji, Iraq, are swinging new hockey sticks and slapping a red ball into regulation nets due to the efforts of some of their hometown hockey heroes.

Hockey has become a getaway for Soldiers at FOB Summerall and with the large amount of equipment being sent to them from the National Hockey League and various hockey organizations, the game will be able to continue for Soldiers in future deployments to Iraq.

After a long day of conducting combat patrols or pulling guard duty, Sgt. 1st Class Andrew Fay, personal security officer for the 42nd Infantry Division Artillery commander, and native of Roxbury, Mass., said it is nice for Soldiers to have an outlet and place to relax.

"It's made a lot of people happy," Fay said. "This is one of our things that we do when we have some down time; it's one of the few things we have."



Goaltender, Spc. Jason Pierucci, communications specialist for Headquarters, Headquarters Battery, 42nd Infantry Division Artillery, stops the street hockey ball before it enters his team's net during a hockey tournament at Forward Operating Base Summerall, Iraq. Pierucci is a native of Randolph, Mass.



Staff Sgt. Thomas Abreu, (right) a New Bedford, Mass., native with Headquarters, Headquarters Battery, 42nd Infantry Division Artillery, fights off Maj. Patrick Keefe, (left) while trying to sink the street hockey ball into his opponent's net at a hockey tournament at Forward Operating Base Summerall, Iraq.

Fay said the game provides the Soldiers with a piece of home that they have all grown up with.

"It makes you feel like you are at home," Fay said. "Everybody who plays here is basically from the New England states, there are a few people from New York, Massachusetts, a few are from Pennsylvania so we all play hockey in one form or another, and here we are getting back to home."

Everyone really enjoys playing and there are a few Soldiers who play each other a few times a week said Sgt. Thomas Lynch, a legal noncommissioned officer with the 42nd DIVARTY, Task Force Liberty.

"Everyone who comes has a blast," Lynch said. "A lot of times the guys come on Tuesday and Thursday, but the equipment is always available and all the guys appreciate it."

Fay said the equipment donated by the hockey organizations and shipped to them courtesy of UPS included nets, balls, sticks, gloves, helmets and other miscellaneous items that easily total up to more than \$10,000, and is being put to good use.

"Look at everyone," Fay said. "Everyone is laughing, playing, having a real good time, there is no out there right now, only right here."



Souvenir hunters beware . . .

You can't bring them all home

By Maj. Patrick Chaisson
HQ 42d Infantry Division

So you're a Soldier in Task Force Liberty about to depart the combat zone. Your tour is over and you want a souvenir of your time here. But what is an appropriate memento from Operation Iraqi Freedom?

I can help.

Part of my job is to brief the troops on what they can and cannot bring back from Southwest Asia. I'd like to share these hints with you now.

Your choice of keepsake must be tasteful, safe and legal. A military customs inspector at your redeployment camp determines what is safe and legal; your spouse back home has the final say on taste.

While shopping for souvenirs, it helps to remember "W.W.W.S." That stands for "What Would Wifey Say" (married female Soldiers should substitute the word "Hubby" here).

That life-sized brass camel statue which looked so attractive in the bazaar will get through Customs but might not pass inspection with "Household Six." If you can imagine your spouse exclaiming "there's no way you're bringing that thing into my house", then you might want to reconsider your selection.

There are some trophies you just cannot take back home. While these banned items may seem obvious to anybody blessed with common sense, sadly not everyone is blessed with common sense. That's why our friendly customs inspectors search your stuff before you get to go home.

Here is a partial list of contraband that may not be brought back from overseas, and why:

Sand. There exists a critical shortage of sand in Southwest Asia. Not even one grain can be spared. Besides, there is a real threat that the spirit of an ancient warrior king resides in the sand, ready to rise up in vengeance against anyone who dares disturb his centuries-old sleep. Didn't The Mummy

NOW SHOWING IN YOUR THEATER!!!
You can't take it with you!

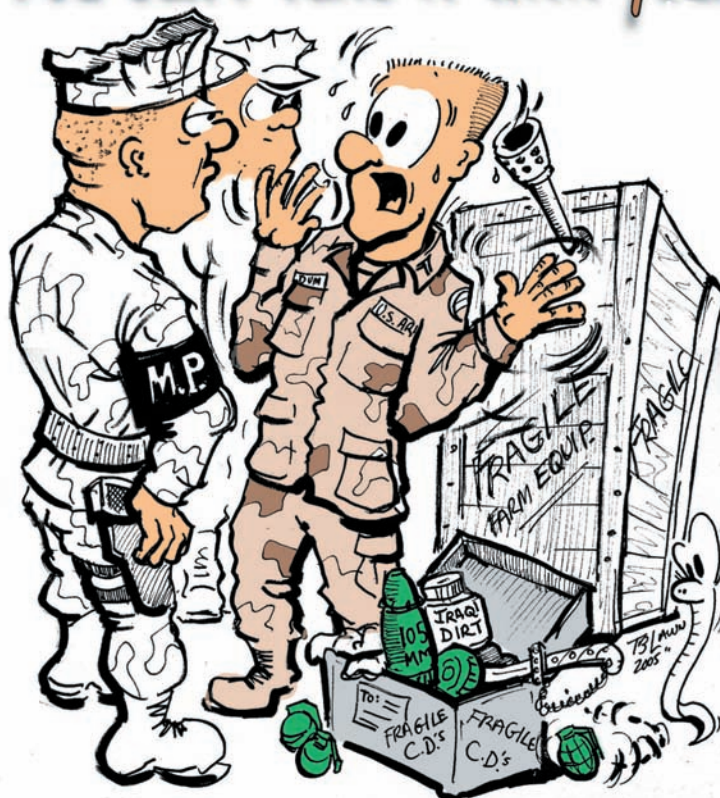


Illustration by Staff Sgt. Timothy Lawn/Special to the Rainbow Reveal

teach you anything?

Weapons. A select-fire assault rifle is an excellent, even necessary item to have in the combat zone. Not so much back home. While the neighbors might be impressed with your new AK-47 rifle, local law enforcement authorities will likely be even more impressed and want to talk to you about how you got it – through a bullhorn.

Ammunition and explosives. Of all things that can be used as a paperweight, the hand grenade is a poor choice. It rolls all over your desk, and can detonate on very little (3-5 seconds, to be exact) notice. Our bomb-sniffing dogs will remind you of this explosive fact at the customs inspection.

Tanks. Modern tank-killing ammunition contains depleted uranium, a radioactive substance that lingers inside the ve-

hicle for years afterwards. A T-72 tank on your front lawn would complement any home's decor, but the radioactivity might harm any neighborhood kids who play on it. Shipping home a 49-ton piece of wrecked Iraqi armor would require a second mortgage anyway, so leave the tanks where you found them.

UXO. The term "dud" is commonly used to identify both unexploded ordnance and any idiot who plays around with this stuff. Just because it hasn't gone off doesn't mean it won't go off. Keep your hands to yourself and keep your hands.

Cubans. Anything that tastes this good has to be either illegal or bad for you. Cuban cigars are both. Enjoy your Havanas here; at Customs you'll encounter a squadron of talking parrots specially trained to sniff out Communist tobacco.

Pets. The list of prohibited pets includes grasshoppers, lizards and camel spiders. Admit it, the whole

time you were deployed all you thought about was home. Iraq is their home. If you bring a pet back to the States, that animal will spend the rest of its life missing home. Is that what you want?

Other hazardous materials. In this category are scorpions, snakes and other things that make you go "ouch." Whether dead or alive, squished, stuffed or encased in plastic, there's no earthly reason why you need a sand viper. It would make a neat April Fools Day prank, though....

Hopefully these hints will help the redeploying servicemember find that souvenir that is both safe and appropriate, tasteful yet still able to pass a customs search. Selecting the right memento of your service will lead to years of pleasant memories, something to be remembered long after the sand flea bites heal.



Never Forget

The Soldiers serving
part of the Task

Staff Sgt. Todd Olson

1st Bn. 128th Inf. Regt.
Samarra, Iraq
Dec. 27

Sgt. 1st Class Mark C. Warren

3rd Bn., 116th Armor
FOB Warrior, Iraq
Jan. 31

Staff Sgt. Steven Bayow

2nd Bn., 7th Inf. Regt.
Bayji, Iraq
Feb. 4

Sgt. Daniel Torres

2nd Bn., 7th Inf. Regt.
Bayji, Iraq
Feb. 4

Sgt. Rene Knox Jr.

5th Bn., 7th Cav. Regt.
Balad, Iraq
Feb. 13

Sgt. Chad Lake

5th Bn., 7th Cav. Regt.
Balad, Iraq
Feb. 13

Spc. Dakotah Gooding

5th Bn., 7th Cav.
Balad, Iraq
Feb. 13

Pfc. David J. Brangman

3rd Bn., 69th Armor
Patrol Base Uvanni, Iraq
Feb. 13

Sgt. 1st Class David Salie

2nd Bn., 69th Armor
Baqubah, Iraq
Feb. 14

Spc. Justin B. Carter

1st Bn., 15th Inf. Regt.
FOB McKenzie, Iraq
Feb. 16

Spc. Jacob Palmatier

1st Bn., 30th Inf. Regt.
Qaryat, Iraq
Feb. 24

Sgt. Monta S. Ruth

1st Bn., 15th Inf. Regt.
Samarra, Iraq
Aug. 31

Spc. Adriana Salem

3rd Forward Support Bn.
FOB Remagen, Iraq
March 4

Sgt. Paul W. Thomason III

2nd Sqd., 278th Cav.
Kirkuk, Iraq
March 20

Sgt. 1st Class Robbie D. McNary

1st Bn., 163rd Armor
Hawijah, Iraq
March 31

Sgt. 1st Class Stephen C. Kennedy

1st Sqd., 278th Cav.
Balad Ruz, Iraq
April 4

Staff Sgt. Kevin D. Davis

Troop G, 82nd Cav.
Hawijah, Iraq
April 8

Spc. Aleina Ramirez-Gonzalez

3rd BTB, 1st BCT
Tikrit, Iraq
April 15

Pfc. Steven F. Sirko

1st Bn., 30th Inf. Regt.
Muqaddiyah, Iraq
April 17

Spc. David L. Rice

1st Battery, 5th FA
Muqaddiyah, Iraq
April 26

Sgt. Timothy C. Kiser

116th Engineers
Hawija, Iraq
April 28

Sgt. Gary A. Eckert Jr.

983rd En.
Samarra, Iraq
May 8

Spc. Steven R. Givens

1st Bn. 15th Inf. Regt.
Samarra, Iraq
May 8

Sgt. Matthew C. Bohling

2nd Bn., 69th Armor
Ar Ramadi, Iraq
Sept. 5

Sgt. Andrew R. Jodon

3rd Bn., 69th Armor
Samarra, Iraq
May 12

Pfc. Travis W. Anderson

2nd Bn., 7th Inf. Regt.
Bayji, Iraq
May 13

Pfc. Wesley R. Riggs

2nd Bn., 7th Inf. Regt.
Tikrit, Iraq
May 17

Sgt. Carl J. Morgain

1st Bn., 112th Inf. Regt.
Kadasia, Iraq
May 22

Sgt. John B. Ogburn III

3rd Bn., 116th Armor
Kirkuk, Iraq
May 22

Sgt. Alfred B. Siler

278th RSS, 278th RCT
Tuz, Iraq
May 25

CW4 Matthew S. Lourey

1st Bn., 17th Cav.
Buhriz, Iraq
May 27

CW2 Joshua M. Scott

1st Bn., 17th Cav.
Buhriz, Iraq
May 27

Sgt. 1st Class Virgil R. Case

145 Support Bn., 116th Armor
Kirkuk, Iraq
June 1

Cpl. Randall D. Preusse

Co. A, 386th Eng. Bn
Davilla, Texas
June 5

Spc. Carrie L. French

145th Support Bn., 116th Armor
Kirkuk, Iraq
June 5

g in the Multinational Division North Central, Iraq are an important Force Liberty team. We will always remember our fallen heroes.

Capt. Philip T. Esposito
HHC, 42nd Inf. Div.
Tikrit, Iraq
June 8

1st Lt. Louis E. Allen
HHC, 42nd Inf. Div.
Tikrit, Iraq
June 8

1st Lt. Michael J. Fasnacht
1st Bn., 15th Inf. Regt.
Ad Dwar, Iraq
June 8

Staff Sgt. Mark O. Edwards
2nd Sqd., 278th Cav.
Tuz, Iraq
June 9

1st Lt. Noah Harris
2nd Bn., 69th Armor
Buhritz, Iraq
June 18

Cpl. William A. Long
2nd Bn., 69th Armor
Buhritz, Iraq
June 18

Spc. Charles A. Kaufman
1st Bn., 128th Inf. Regt.
Baghdad, Iraq
June 26

Spc. Robert E. Hall
467th Eng., 1st BCT
Ad Dujayl, Iraq
June 28

Sgt. Manny Hornedo
50th MSB, DISCOM
Tikrit, Iraq
June 28

Spc. Christopher W. Dickison
2nd Bn, 34th Armor
Baqubah, Iraq
July 5

Sgt. 1st Class Ronald T. Wood
1st Battery, 148th FA
Rashad, Iraq
July 16

Sgt. Dale M. Hardiman
Co. C, 876th Eng. Bn.
Central City, Pa.
Sept. 10

Staff Sgt. Frank Tiai
100th Bn., 442nd Inf.
Balad, Iraq
July 17

Sgt. Christopher J. Taylor
1st Battery, 41st FA
Balad, Iraq
July 24

Spc. Adam J. Harting
3rd Bn., 69th Armor
Samarra, Iraq
July 25

Spc. Edward L. Myers
3rd Bn., 69th Armor
Samarra, Iraq
July 27

Pfc. Jason D. Scheuerman
1st Bn., 30th Inf. Regt.
Muqdadiyah, Iraq
July 30

Sgt. Brahim J. Jeffcoat
1st Bn., 111th Inf. Regt.
Balad, Iraq
August 6

Spc. Kurt E. Krout
1st Bn., 111th Inf. Regt.
Balad, Iraq
August 6

Pfc. Nathaniel E. Detample
1st Bn., 111th Inf. Regt.
Bayji, Iraq
August 9

Spc. John Kulick
1st Bn., 111th Inf. Regt.
Bayji, Iraq
August 9

Spc. Gennaro Pellegrini Jr.
1st Bn., 111th Inf. Regt.
Bayji, Iraq
August 9

Sgt. Francis J. Straub Jr.
1st Bn., 111th Inf. Regt.
Bayji, Iraq
August 9

Sgt. Kurtis D. K. Arcala
2nd Bn., 7th Inf. Regt.
Tikrit, Iraq
Sept. 11

1st Lt. David L. Giaimo
2nd Bn., 7th Inf. Regt.
Tikrit, Iraq
August 12

Staff Sgt. Asbury F. Hawn II
3rd Sqd., 278th Cav.
Tuz, Iraq
August 14

Spc. Gary L. Reese Jr.
3rd Sqd., 278th Cav.
Tuz, Iraq
August 14

Sgt. Shannon D. Taylor
3rd Sqd., 278th Cav.
Tuz, Iraq
August 14

Spc. Ray Fuhrmann II
3rd Bn., 69th Armor
Samarra, Iraq
August 18

Pfc. Timothy Seamans
3rd Bn., 69th Armor
Samarra, Iraq
August 18

Staff Sgt. Jeremy Doyle
3rd Bn., 69th Armor
Samarra, Iraq
August 18

Spc. Nathan Bouchard
3rd Bn., 69th Armor
Samarra, Iraq
August 18

Staff Sgt. Victoir P. Lieurance
3rd Sqd., 278th Cav.
Samarra, Iraq
August 22

Sgt. Joseph D. Hunt
3rd Sqd., 278th Cav.
Samarra, Iraq
August 22

1st Lt. Carlos J. Diaz
2nd Bn., 69th Armor
Baqubah, Iraq
August 23

Remembering

9/11

Photos by Spc. Adam Phelps/22nd MPAD



During a 9-11 remembrance ceremony held Sept. 11, Staff Sgt. Peter Roe, bugler for the 42nd Infantry Division Band, plays taps.



The Task Force Liberty command group sits in silence, during a 9-11 remembrance ceremony at Forward Operating Base Danger, Tikrit, Iraq.



Private 1st Class Michiel Colesanti, 642nd Military Intelligence Battalion, Task Force Liberty, pays his respect to those lost during the Sept. 11 attacks at an observance ceremony.